

CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An accessory carrier assembly mountable to a vehicle having a hitch element, the assembly comprising:

a first segment having a first aperture, said first segment being capable of telescopically engaging a first vehicle mounted hitch element of a first cross sectional size;

a second segment, wherein at least a portion of the second segment is fitted in said first aperture and wherein the first and second segments are connected, said second segment ~~also~~ being capable of telescopically engaging a second vehicle mounted hitch element of a second cross sectional size;

an accessory carrier element, said accessory carrier element selectively engageable with either the first segment or the second segment so as to permit the selective engagement of the first segment with the first hitch element and of the second segment with the second hitch element; and

wherein the first cross sectional size of the first hitch element is not equal to the second cross sectional size of the second hitch element.

2. (original) The assembly according to claim 1, wherein the accessory carrier element is selected from the group consisting of: a bicycle rack, a ski rack, a snowboard rack, at least one accessory shelf and at least one accessory bustle.

3. (currently amended) The assembly according to claim 2, wherein the first segment is angled at either an acute angle or a right angle between 0 and 90 degrees so as to cause the first hitch element to be engaged on a different spatial plane than the second hitch element.

4. (currently amended) The assembly according to claim 1, wherein the first segment is angled at either an acute angle or a right angle ~~between 0 and 90 degrees~~ so as to cause the first hitch element to be engaged on a different spatial plane than the second hitch element.
5. (original) The assembly according to claim 1, wherein the accessory carrier element further comprises at least one support member connecting the accessory carrier element and either the first segment or the second segment.
6. (original) The assembly according to claim 5, wherein the support member comprises a pair of spaced plates.
7. (original) The assembly according to claim 4, wherein the accessory carrier element further comprises at least one support member connecting the accessory carrier element and either the first segment or the second segment.
8. (original) The assembly according to claim 7, wherein the support member comprises a pair of spaced plates.
9. (new) A reversible shank for mounting an accessory to a vehicle having either a first vehicle mounted hitch element or a second vehicle mounted hitch element wherein the cross section of the first hitch element is larger than the cross section of the second hitch element, the reversible shank comprising:

a first segment having a first cross section capable of telescopic engagement with the first hitch element;

a second segment having a second cross section capable of telescopic engagement with the second hitch element, the cross section of the first segment being larger than the cross section of the second segment, wherein the second segment extends from the first segment.

10. (new) The reversible shank of claim 9, wherein the second segment is welded to the first segment.

11. (new) The reversible shank of claim 9, wherein the first segment further comprises an aperture therein for telescopically receiving a portion of the second segment.

12. (new) The reversible shank of claim 9, wherein the second segment extends co-axially from the first segment.

13. (new) The reversible shank of claim 12, wherein the second segment is welded to the first segment.

14. (new) An accessory carrier assembly selectively attachable to either a first vehicle mounted hitch element or a second vehicle mounted hitch element wherein the cross section of the first hitch element is larger than the cross section of the second hitch element, the accessory carrier assembly comprising:

a reversible shank comprising:

a first segment having a first cross section capable of telescopic engagement with the first hitch element; and

a second segment having a second cross section capable of telescopic engagement with the second hitch element, the cross section of the first segment being larger than the cross section of the second segment, wherein the second segment extends from the first segment;

an accessory carrier element engageable with either the first or second segment when the other first or second segment is telescopically engaged with its corresponding hitch element.

15. (new) The assembly of claim 14, wherein the accessory carrier element is engageable with the second segment through the use of at least a pair of bushings.

16. (new) The assembly of claim 15, wherein the second segment is welded to the first segment.

17. (new) The assembly of claim 15, wherein the first segment further comprises an aperture therein for telescopically receiving a portion of the second segment.

18. (new) The assembly of claim 15, wherein the second segment extends co-axially from the first segment.

19. (new) The assembly of claim 18, wherein the second segment is welded to the first segment.